



St. Angela's Convent
Prelate



1919 - 1945



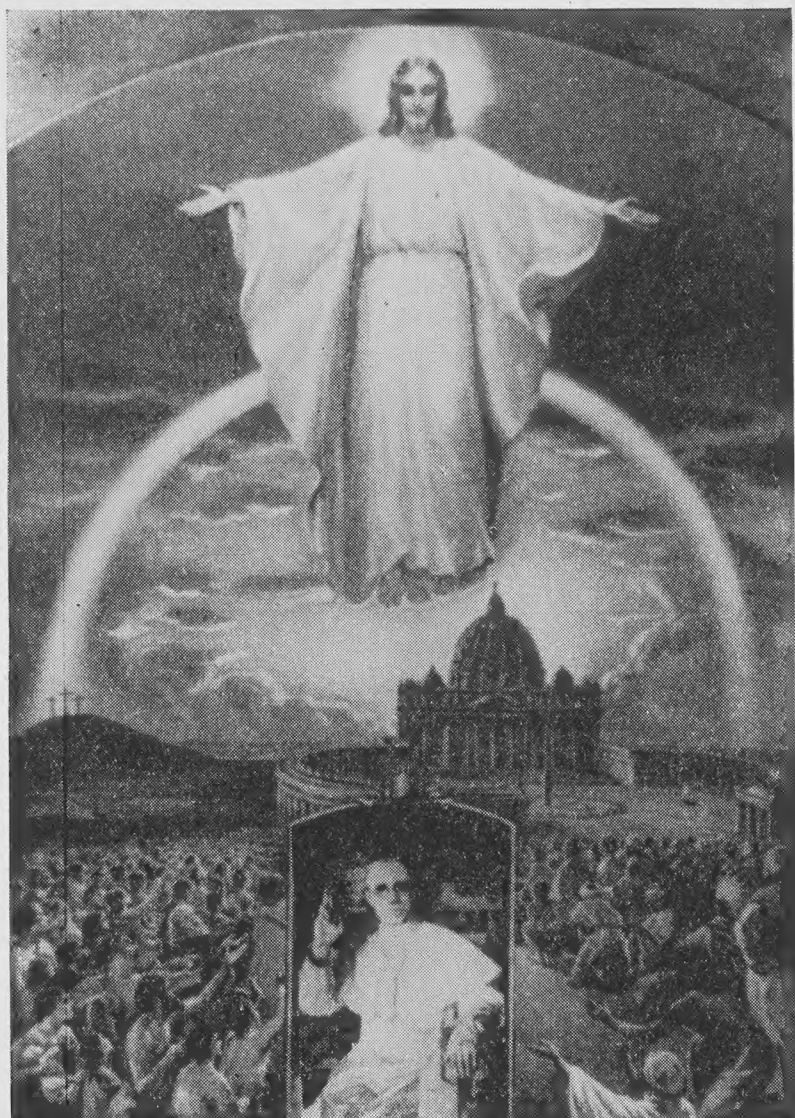
Ursulines of St. Angela

1535-1945



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PRELATE, SASKATCHEWAN
CANADA



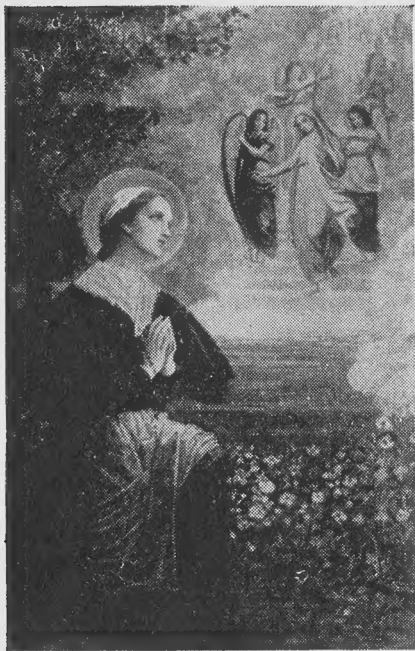
PART I

*"Gather up the fragments lest they be lost."
(St. John VI - 12).*

GRATITUDE TO GOD prompts us to write this short history which will afford nourishment to future generations. We have been walking in a land of Benediction. Our hymn of praise unceasingly ascends to Heaven to thank God for the foundation of our Institute.

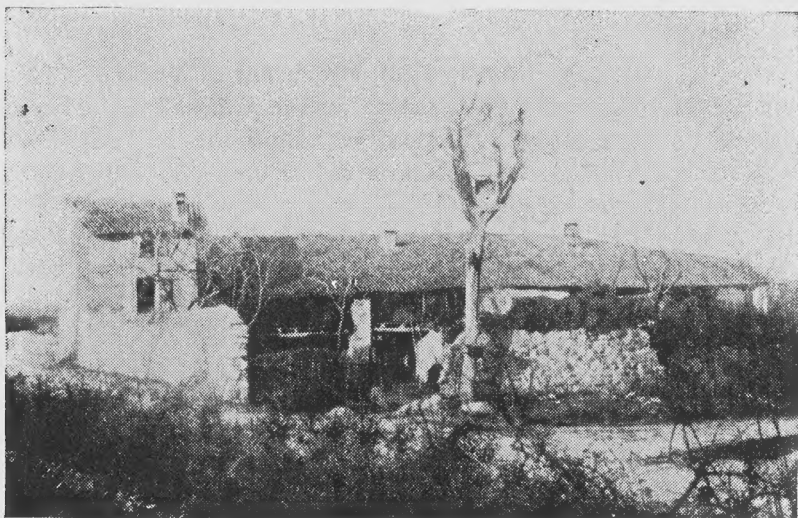
St. Theresa, that charming Saint, says in one of her works, *"We animate the children of a noble race to become virtuous by speaking to them of the virtues of their ancestors; we relate their enterprises, deeds of valour, traits of goodness, and thus induce the children to become brave and generous like them."*

In truth, it is very important that after the study of our religion and of our Holy Rule, we apply ourselves to the study of all that relates to our Order and to our Institute,



*"Angela, know that
God has shown you
this vision to signify
that before you die,
you are to found, in
Brescia, a company of
virgins like these."*

VISION OF BRUDAZZO



THE BIRTHPLACE OF ST. ANGELA

Life of St. Angela Merici

FOUNDRESS OF THE URSULINE ORDER

"....the weak things of the world hath God chosen, that he may confound the strong."

Angela Merici was born on March 21st, 1474, at Desenzano, a small town in Lombardy. Her parents belonged to the middle class and were respected by all who knew them. The family consisted of several boys and two girls. It was a simple, happy home, for all were united by the bonds of piety and of deep affection. Their life was calm and uneventful; and peace of heart was the reward of their prayer and labour.

Brought up in the heart of the country, Angela spoke the simple language of her people; she could not even write. From an early age she had consecrated her heart to Christ as her spouse. Her ardour for self-sacrifice knew no bounds. Fearing that her beautiful fair hair might be a cause of temptation, she bathed it in a mixture of soot and water and ruined its beauty. She grew pale from her vigils and fasts. In that world of the pagan Renaissance, Angela's young heart was fixed on Christ. She longed for "a desert: where she could pray, suffer, and die in peace." God heard her prayer and broke one by one the links which bound her affections to earth.

At fifteen, Angela was left an orphan. Her maternal uncle, Biancosi, a good Catholic and a wealthy man, brought Angela and her sister, (now the sole survivors of the family) to his home at Salo. Shortly after, Angela's sister died. Under these repeated trials, the young girl bowed her head in deep resignation. She returned to Desenzano on her uncle's death. Alone in the fields one day, absorbed in prayer, she saw a dazzling light which broke forth from dark clouds. There appeared a mysterious ladder reaching from heaven to earth, on which countless virgins, two and two, ascended and descended. Clad in bright robes and bearing glorious crowns, they sang melodious hymns. Angela fell into an ecstasy, and could neither speak nor move. One of the virgins came forward: "Angela," she said, "now that God has shown you this vision to signify

that before you die, you are to found, in Brescia, 'a company of virgins like these."

The Divine Will and her own special vocation were thus clearly indicated. Assured by her confessor that all came from God, she gathered around her a number of young girls and trained them to the apostolate of instruction. Little children were then assembled and taught Christian Doctrine.

Attracted by Franciscan poverty and austerity, Angela joined the Franciscan Tertiaries. She gladly renounced all temporal possessions; she slept on a mat, with a stone for a pillow. Her dress was of coarse material; she wore a rough hairshirt. Her food consisted of fruit and wild herbs. On all Fridays throughout the year, and on three days a week in Lent, she ate absolutely nothing. But, as a Franciscan Tertiary, she enjoyed the privilege, (rare in those days), of daily Communion, and this Heavenly Bread became the support of her body as of her soul.

The French invasion of Lombardy closed the gates of Brescia against Angela for some years. Finally, in 1515, she was able to go there. Her gracious tact and sympathy, her enlightened prudence and her sanctity had won many friends for Angela in all ranks. She was welcomed to the home of the noble Patingola. After some months, she accepted the invitation of the family of Antonio Romano, a wealthy merchant and a true servant of God. Impelled by devotion, Angela made three pilgrimages: the first, to Mantua, to pray at the tomb of the Venerable Mother Hosanna, a saintly Dominican nun who had recently died; the second, to the Holy Land; the third, to Rome.

On her dangerous voyage to the Holy Land, Angela was suddenly struck blind, without any apparent cause, near Crete. However, she bravely continued her journey, and offered herself to God as a victim of expiation. She said, "If I cannot see the Holy Place, God, at least, will not refuse me tears to weep over my own sins and those of the world." On the return journey, God miraculously restored her sight on the island of Crete.

In Brescia, Francis Sforza, the exiled Duke of Milan, begged of Angela to be his spiritual guide and his intercessor with God in his crushing afflictions. She became his counsellor and his revered friend.

At this time God showered marvellous gifts on Angela. Her infused knowledge of Latin helped her to penetrate the hidden meaning of Holy Scripture. She soared aloft on the wings of mystic contemplation. Through her discernment of spirits and her prophetic light, she exercised a great influence over clergy and princes alike.

In 1530, Angela was ready for her great mission. On the advice of her confessor, Father Seraphim of Bologna, she selected twelve young girls, and instructed them daily in her little room near St. Afra's Church in Brescia. This little room is now a place of pilgrimage; the benches used by her first companions can still be seen. A pious widow, Elizabeth Prato, placed an oratory at Angela's disposal. Here she continued her instructions for two years. One night, when she was alone in prayer, Our Divine Lord appeared and spoke severely to her, "Where is your faith? I have shown you clearly My Will, and yet the order of virgins which is to contribute to My Glory and to aid My Church, torn by heresy and dishonored by relaxation, does not yet exist. Your zeal cools as I add repeated proofs of My love. You speak but empty words, for they are belied by your endless delays. I begin to doubt your fidelity."

With bitter tears Angela replied, "O Lord! forget my past negligence. I deserve fully Your reproaches, which have penetrated to the depths of my soul. I will repair for my delay by my prompt obedience. This very day will I begin the work, to prove to You, O my Lord, my sorrow, my zeal, and my absolute submission to Your Holy Will."

The plan of her institute was immediately drawn up, and her companions unanimously promised to observe the Rule. Angela was strongly encouraged in her undertaking by a vision of the Virgin Martyr, St. Ursula, who gave her a standard, as Angela was to be the commander of the new army of virgins and the leader in their warfare against the enemies of Christ. Angela chose St. Ursula as the Special Patroness of her Company, and called it the Company of St. Ursula. For herself she reserved the labours of Foundress. St. Ursula was the recognized patroness of youth and learning; she was especially the patroness of the famous mediaeval universities of Paris and Coimbra.

November 25th, 1535, feast of St. Catherine, Virgin and Martyr, was the day chosen for the official foundation of the Company. This consisted of Angela, her first twelve companions, and fifteen other virgins. All heard Mass, received Holy Communion, and each made a simple vow of chastity. Then all began the apostolate in their own homes; they instructed young girls and children in Christian Doctrine, they visited hospitals, prisons, and the poor. Soon in each district of Brescia there was a directress to organize the work. As the Sisters were scattered, each in her own home, there could be no community life; but periodical meetings and daily religious exercises in common, prepared the way for regular observance.

There were already seventy-two members a month after the foundation. After much prayer, Angela dictated the Constitutions to her secretary, Gabriel Cozzano; these received episcopal approbation on August



ST. ANGELA TEACHING

8, 1536. Angela then summoned her first Chapter, at which she was unanimously chosen as first Superior. She renewed her zeal and self-sacrifice in the interests of her children. But feeling her end draw near, she compiled her "Counsels" and made her "Will." On January 27, 1540, at 9.30 p.m., she sweetly slept in the Lord.

Angela left behind her a company of one hundred and fifty Ursulines, the mustard seed which was to multiply in the world and to survive through the centuries. 'Hold for certain, my dear Mothers and Sisters, that our Company is the work of God. His hand drew it from nothing; His hand will sustain it; He will never abandon it, even to the end of the world. He has established it, who can destroy it? Believe these words, I know what I am saying. Blessed are they who will walk on this way.' (St. Angela).

In 1544, four years after her death, Paul III approved the Company of St. Ursula.

Upon the publication of the decree of approval came a number of requests for the introduction of the Society into various places: Desenzano, Salò, Cremona, and Milan. Before the end of the 17th century there was no town of any importance in Italy that did not have its Community of St. Ursula! In Milan especially it found a great patron and protector in St. Charles Borromeo—who introduced a mitigated form of cloister, the Sisters not being allowed to leave the house without special permission. Milan had eighteen houses, and six hundred Sisters.

The Ursuline Order took its rise in Italy, but its perfect development is to be found in France. The first house of French Ursulines was established at Avignon in 1594, by Madame de Bermond. They adopted the Rule of the Congregation of Milan.

A few years later the Institute was introduced into Paris by Madame Acarie and Madame St. Beuve. The Congregation of Paris was converted into a regular monastic order, by decree of Approval by Pope Paul V, on June 16, 1612. His Holiness, moreover, ordained that Religious should add to the three Vows, a fourth; which bound them to the instruction of youth. In France seven large Monasteries were inaugurated, each of which became the Motherhouse of an innumerable progeny: Paris—16; Lyons—13; Bordeaux—16; Dijon—24; Toulouse—11; Tulle—7; Arles—5; Avignon—15.

In 1614, Monsignor Stretcheus, the auxiliary Bishop of Liege, seeing so many young girls deprived of instruction, founded a community to which he soon afterwards gave the Rule and Constitutions of the Ursulines of Bordeaux. Its numbers grew rapidly; from it proceeded

the convent of Cologne. The very name stirs emotion in the heart of a daughter of St. Ursula, for there she and her numerous band of faithful followers died that their faith and virtue might live. Early mediæval records tell us that not long after the martyrdom of this illustrious Saint and her companions, a church was built over the place where their relics had been collected, and that a monastery of canonesses, known as "The Virgins of St. Ursula," was established there in 922, by Herman 1st, Bishop of Cologne. As soon as these religious heard of the foundation of Blessed Angela's Company of St. Ursula, they sent to Brescia the heads of two companions of the holy Virgin and Martyr. In 1672, Ursulines who had come from Liege to Cologne in 1639, purchased the spot where the martyrdom took place, and built there a Monastery which they entered on the Feast of Corpus Christi, in 1676. This Monastery escaped the general fate of expulsion in 1794.

The community of Cologne aided in the establishment of Dorsten, in 1669, the only convent in Westphalia spared by royal decree of 1817, on account of its usefulness in the education of youth. The communities of Vienna, Pressburg, and Haselucenne also proceeded from Cologne in 1660, 1676, and 1854, respectively. Canada, where already Mother Mary of the Incarnation had gone from Tours to Quebec, was next to receive the Ursulines from Cologne who established a community at Prelate, Saskatchewan, in 1919.



THE TOWN OF PRELATE

PART II

CLOUDS OF WAR were ominously gathering over Europe. Would the expulsion of Religious from Germany be repeated as during the time of the *Kulturkampf*? Religious Orders anxiously asked themselves this question and sought means and ways of meeting the catastrophe — should it come. America offered a vast field for apostolic labours, and maybe — a haven in troubled times,

Three communities of Ursulines, namely: Cologne, Haseluenne, and Schweidnitz, undertook the joint venture of crossing the ocean to Canada in the autumn of 1912. Winnipeg was their destination where they took charge of the parochial school in the Parish of St. Joseph.

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How queer this Canada seemed! The climate was as changeable as it was severe; the people appeared odd; the language and customs seemed strange. Think of it — for a nickel one could ride in a street car all over the city twice — when one did not know where to get off! The task of learning to speak English was funny, too, and gave rise to many amusing episodes in the classroom as well as on shopping days. "The snow is how silver," one Sister would admiringly exclaim. Another, who had great difficulty sounding the *th*'s told her class that they should never be ashamed of their face (*faith*)!

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The storm in Europe did break, in the late summer of 1914, as World War No. I. All overseas communication ceased. No more letters, no more parcels came to cheer the homesick, anxious hearts and minds. The members on this side of the ocean must act to provide that hoped for haven, if needed, for their community, which was now wholly caught in the whirlpool of a dreadful war.

Anti-German feeling ran high in Winnipeg, and it was thought best to seek foundations elsewhere. Therefore, the Ursulines originating from Haseluenne started a foundation in Bruno, Sask.; while those from Schweidnitz went for a short time to Regina, Sask., and from there to Vibank and Grayson. One of the Cologne Sisters had returned to Germany shortly before the outbreak of the war, one joined the Sister at Vibank, and Mother Clementia and Sister Thekla stayed with the Sisters at Grayson.

In April 1919 Rev. Father Riedinger, O.M.I., who had been in Winnipeg and also in Grayson, was transferred to Prelate. He brought with him Mother Luitgard and Mother Clara of the Schweidnitz branch, and Mother Clementia and Sister Thekla of that of Cologne.

The first home of the Sisters was a private house belonging to a family by the name of Weinberger. The building of a convent was proposed to the people and the project was enthusiastically favoured. Donations were accepted and the excavation of the basement was begun. At the same time collecting tours through the district were undertaken in order to raise the necessary funds to meet expenses.

It was a frequent, yet ever novel sight, to see two Sisters being driven about the country side in an open car, without a top for protection against heat or cold. Nevertheless, out they went from farm to farm soliciting cash donations where that was possible, or promissory notes on which credit from the bank might be obtained. Mr. Simon Richl was one of the standby drivers who considered playing chauffeur to the Sisters quite an enviable position and would have neither inclement weather, nor bad roads deprive him of the pleasure of jauntily sitting at the wheel of a 1915 model car, criss-crossing the district, like a king on a checker-board, jumping and bumping his less conspicuous fellow men into being magnanimous in helping along the "good cause" with actual contributions, or generous promises.

In the meantime, classes for the Catholic children were conducted in St. Francis Hall, at that time the Prelate Theatre Hall. The Prelate School consisted at that time of two rooms; these continued to operate for the non-Catholic children.

In July a letter from Mother Ignatia, Superior of the Sisters from Schweidnitz, arrived in which she declared her community unable to maintain a foundation in Prelate, and relinquished all claims to such. Mother Luitgard and Mother Clara were to return to Vibank; and Mother Clementia and Sister Thekla to Cologne. Upon further negotiations, Mother Clara returned, and Mother Luitgard remained as the Mother Prefect of the nucleus of the Community of three.

At last the bricks for the building were being shipped. But to Father Riedinger's great surprise, they were being unloaded at Lemsford! Why? Because the conductor had seen the Sisters on the street there. No, no! They must come to Prelate! And so they did. The next Sunday a procession left the little church to wend its way up the hill, and the corner stone was laid and blessed. All summer every available help was employed to speed the construction of the building.



OUR LADY'S STATUE

The basement and the first storey were completed, and a temporary flat roof put on. On the Feast of the Immaculate Conception the house was blessed and the three Sisters took up their abode in St. Angela's Convent.

Two classrooms were operated, and the following year the back of the chapel was curtained off to provide for another. Father Riedinger occupied the two small rooms in the north-east corner of the basement. His housekeeper, Miss Engelmann, remained and assisted Sister Thekla in the housework.

Some boarders were accepted; and the Catholic children from town attended the Convent Parochial School as day scholars.

Sister Elizabeth was the first postulant. She made the canonical year of her Novitiate at Chatham, Ont. Besides doing this favour for our Community, the Ursulines of Chatham donated the beautiful statue of Our Lady of Prompt Succor, which has ever held the place of honor in the parlor of St. Angela's. It is attributed to Our Lady's intercession that two English speaking postulants joined, namely: Sister Margaret, an Irish-American widow and experienced teacher; and Sister Teresa, a fine music teacher.

The little town of Prelate grew quickly. As the parochial system did not prove satisfactory, it was discontinued, and the three classrooms were rented to the town to be operated in conjunction with the school down town. One of these rooms was rented for a high school, while the two Sisters were engaged to teach the Catholic children of Grades I to V in the other two rooms. The two classrooms in the town school accommodated the Protestant pupils of Grades I to V; and for those of Catholics and Protestants of Grades VI to VIII.

When traveling became safe again after the war, Father Riedinger was granted a trip to Germany by his Superior. He brought back with him two Sisters: Sister Engelberta, and Mother Hildegard. The former was an accomplished musician, while the latter excelled in needle-work. Thus was not only the number, but also the efficiency of the Community increased. The artistic taste and perfect workmanship in the fancy work that appeared at the next annual bazaar, greatly contributed toward the popularity of the new convent.

But serious financial difficulties arose. Credit had been sought and obtained at the bank on the strength of the Promissory Notes accepted during the collecting tours. Alas! Many of those promises were not fulfilled, and when the bank attempted collections, the people in question objected on the grounds that none of their promissory notes were to be given over to the bank for collection, and, therefore many remained unpaid.

The flat temporary roof on the convent proved a disadvantage during rainy weather, when the poor Sisters were often kept up all night wiping up water. Demands for funds became so pressing that something had to be done about it...

For that reason permission was obtained to collect in the United States, and Mother Clementia undertook the arduous task of begging across the boarder. Numerous and varied were the incidents connected with such a work, balancing between failure and success, and ranging from the humorous to the serious—even bordering on the tragic. A nun, travelling alone and seeking shelter at convents in large cities, was often regarded with suspicion. Vagabonds some time hide behind a garb for their own evil ends. Consequently, she was not always admitted. At other times she found herself, to her great embarrassment, keenly scrutinized and watched—whether she might not likely be a man! This was often sorely trying when spirits were low after a day, or many days, of failure and discouragement. Many people do not like to be troubled by begging Sisters, and many refusals and insults had to

be endured. But it is equally true that she found many charitable people who generously contributed and willingly helped her in her diverse difficulties.

One consoling feature about the task was that money was coming in and bills were being paid! Also the roof was built, and all parts constructed of wood were painted. That was quite an improvement. Nor were the grounds neglected. Caragana hedges were planted and a grove of poplars, cottonwoods, together with a few maples, was started.

Heating and lighting remained quite a worry. There were no electric lights; and there was not sufficient money to pay a janitor to take care of the furnace. Much of the work had to be done by the boarders. Trimming coal-oil lamps, sweeping and dusting, washing dishes, helping with the furnace, and many more such duties had to be shared by all; but even at that the Sisters' strength was often heavily taxed. But those were also happy times, and the boarders of those days, some of whom later joined the Order, recall many amusing episodes. When finally a private plant to provide electric light was installed, it was welcomed as the greatest luxury.

Next, a small residence for Father Riedinger had to be provided. Living in the two small rooms in the basement called for constant sacrifice. Among other disadvantages, there was the disturbing patter and shuffle of feet from the classroom above. A small building was therefore purchased, which, it is said, had originally been a hen house. This was moved to the east end of the convent, a few feet away from the building, two end walls put up and a roof to connect with the convent. The room thus formed served as office, and the little house was partitioned into two small rooms. That provided three rooms in all for Father's living quarters; while one of his former rooms remained his dining-room.

Another trip to the United States was undertaken in 1923, but this time Mother Clementia was accompanied by Sister Agnes who had joined the Community in the meantime. For two it was much easier and more agreeable. Again the most pressing accounts were settled and two large dormitories on the second floor were completed. Upon their return, just before Christmas, among those to greet them were two postulants, namely, Sister Agatha, and Sister Bernarda.

In the early part of 1924 Mother Clementia was granted a trip to Germany — and a well deserved privilege that was. When returning to Canada that spring, she brought with her Sister Hyacinth. Because Sister Engelberta had found it somewhat difficult to adapt herself to her

new life on the Canadian Prairies, and, consequently, departed again from Prelate, Sister Hyacinth was placed for a short time with the Ursulines at Chatham to become accustomed to Canadian ways, and also to make some of her studies in English. Mother Clementia returned to Prelate and assumed her new office of Superior of the Community as a foundation of Cologne. Consequently, Mother Luitgard returned the following September to her convent in Schweidnitz, Germany. During the five years of her Superiorship, she had at all times given of her best, and left now with the happy knowledge that another Tabernacle had been established for the good Master.



MOTHER CLEMENTIA

Mother Clementia was well acquainted with conditions here. She possessed a fine sense of humor; and her optimistic way of looking at difficulties and trials in life, lightened the manifold hardships of a pioneer beginning. Her high courage and endurance kept her at a task which was far too great for the few Sisters. Her kind and friendly hospitality cheered all who visited the convent, for she believed in: "*Venit hospes, venit Christus.*"

On December 19, 1924, by an Act of Incorporation the Community was made a body corporate and politic under the name of "The Ursulines of St. Angela's Convent," and was granted all the powers, rights and privileges conferred upon such corporations by the laws of Saskatchewan. It could now acquire, exchange or sell property and

conduct all normal corporate business transactions. Before this date such legal transactions were made and signed by Rev. Father Riedinger who had bought, held, and administered the land on which the convent is situated, from the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, under his name. Thus, milestone after milestone was passed in the erection and growth of the Institute.

More boarders and more postulants came. The chapel, which at the start was only curtained off from the classroom adjoining it, had before long been partitioned off by a wall built in such a way that the lower part, about three feet from the floor, was immovable; next came the movable blackboards on a system of pulleys on which they could be pulled up to the ceiling over the part of the upper wall which was also stationary. To accommodate a large number of worshippers, the blackboards were raised, thus combining classroom and chapel into one large chapel. When church services were over, the blackboards were lowered into position, and the desks turned to face the front of the schoolroom, ready for school to be called. When the town school was enlarged, and it became possible to do without this classroom, the partition was removed entirely and the whole space used as chapel.

By that time, about 1934, some of our budding artists had developed sufficient skill to decorate the walls with religious paintings, and thus make it the most beautiful portion of the house—as of course, the chapel ought to be.

The large number of worshippers referred to above, consisted not only of the occupants of the convent, but for a large part of the year also of the parishioners of the parish of Prelate. As Father Riedinger continued to be parish priest, services were held in the parish church, but every Saturday Holy Mass was said at the convent with the parishioners attending. The convent chapel also served the parish as a winter chapel during the winter months. During other seasons Sisters and boarders attended at the parish church until such time when they would have their own Chaplain.

Not only did the community worship in the church, but also conducted the singing and praying of the children during week days, and the choir on Sundays. This practice became very popular with the people. They loved to hear their children pray and sing! And other parishes envied them this privilege, as well as the thorough preparation of First Communion Classes and the beautiful First Communion ceremonies. Mother Clementia in charge of the First Communion Classes, at least for the first decade of the Convent's existence, left nothing un-

done that could enhance the beauty of a First Holy Communion Day and make it a great feast for the parish and an unforgettable one for the First Communicants themselves as one of the nicest days of their life.

Another feature that distinguished the Ursulines as excellent educators also in social activities was the training they afforded both the pupils and the audience in concert entertainment. The choice of material displayed a refinement of taste that would be difficult to surpass; and the thorough training in speaking, singing, and acting was of high educational value in preparing their charges for a fuller and richer life. Nor were the grown-ups of the parish excluded from giving vent to the enthusiasm that awakened in the consciousness of the presence of capable leadership from their pastor and their Sisters. The Passion Play undertaken at so early a stage was quite a venture, nevertheless it turned out a grand success, and again proved the old adage that "patience wins all things." The youthful members of the parish delighted in taking part in such operettas as "Cinderella", and "Snowwhite and the Seven Dwarfs," etc.

Upon the occasion of Prime Minister Martin's visit to the town and to the convent school, the Sisters received gratifying commendation for their youth training abilities. It was also a mark of honor to be favoured with a visit from so distinguished a person, as in those days railways and highways were far from being numerous and, therefore, travel far less extensive. The tune to "Hail Premier, Hail to Thee" is even now remembered by some who were pupils at that time.

Rev. Father Krist, O.M.I., who had made application for Sisters for the parish of Leipzig, Sask., was transferred from there to Tramping Lake, Sask., and renewed his request for Sisters in this place. As our convent still lacked sufficient members to staff a mission, the good Father had to wait until the beginning of the year 1925 when Mother Hildegard, Sister Hyacinth (the latter had just completed a short Normal School course) together with a postulant, were sent there to take over. There were two elementary classes, one taught by Sister Hyacinth in the church basement and the other by a lay teacher — a Miss O'Neil, who was teaching the primary Grades in the then existing one-roomed school. The Sisters were to live in the teacherage — a two storey house consisting of four rooms with a lean-to of two small rooms. When Mother Clementia took the Sisters there, she found neither the house in a condition to live in, nor the church basement in a condition to teach in. As people feel more like feasting than working during Christ-

mas holidays, she was obliged to threaten to take the Sisters back with her before the trustees could be induced to stir in earnest. Upon her next visit to Tramping Lake, one of the old grandpas of the parish, not knowing who she was, confided to her, "That Superior down in Prelate is so much for money!" Her saving sense of humor saved the good old man from immediate embarrassment and let him find out for himself later who it was to whom he was speaking.

All went well, but the inevitable hardships and difficulties of beginnings were not missing. Being poorly built, the house proved to be extremely cold. In very many respects life in Canadian Missions still in the throes of pioneering, was vastly different from that of the large and beautiful convent in Cologne. Therefore, it was not surprising that Mother Hildegard found the strain too much for her and preferred to return to Cologne in the spring of 1926.

That same autumn a second Sister was sent as teacher in a third class-room, also conducted in the church basement, and at Christmas, another Sister, who in the meantime had completed her studies and had attended a short Normal School course, was sent to replace Miss O'Neil. Now the whole school — three classes, was staffed by Sisters.

But God in His goodness made further work possible, When the Oblate Fathers opened St. Paul's College, in Winnipeg in 1926, the little Ursuline Community of Prelate had grown strong enough to comply with their request to let them have four Sisters to manage their kitchen for a year.

At the end of that year we withdrew to take over a two-roomed public school in Quinton. Rev. Father Follonier had made many attempts to obtain Sisters, and was at last rewarded with able co-workers in his task for souls. Here, too, the teacherage served the two Sisters and a postulant as living quarters. It had originally been the first school house and became now known as St. Ursula's Convent.

During the course of the year the parish built a basement church and offered the old church to the Sisters to be remodelled into a dormitory for boarders. The offer was accepted and the plan carried out. The experiment was abandoned, though, after several years because the number of boarders was too small. The building was given back to the parish to be put to more practical use — that of winter chapel and parish hall.

The stormy opposition from the Protestant rate payers to having "Nuns" teaching in public schools called for efficiency and for constant watchfulness and tact. From this opposition much unpleasantness re-

sulted; but it had also its humorous side — especially upon such occasions when Departmental officials came to investigate the situation and called for meetings . . . As a rule accusations are far easier and quicker thrown than they can be proved; much more so is this the case when those concerned are present. It was, indeed, interesting and amusing to see them evaporate into air. Further, to witness old pioneers, many hardly able to speak English, defending their rights, and sometimes even tangling with learned and well versed politicians was worthwhile compensation for, at least a large portion of the unpleasantness endured; and it was also a very edifying example.

Finally the difficulty was settled in the formation of a Protestant Separate School for the minority. Then there was peace — until the “Anderson Government” forced Religious to take off their garb, in an attempt to drive them out of the schools — when the storm broke once more . . . But that (at that time) belonged to the future, and meanwhile the Sisters did not mind in the least being left to devote themselves entirely to the Catholic children.

Quinton, being a very small town, its school enrolment consisted almost wholly of the rural section of the school district. Nevertheless, daily Mass attendance was good, and the building up of a children's choir made praying and singing daily at Holy Mass possible. Besides the children's choir, the Sisters also gave music lessons in the parish, played the organ in church and conducted the choir on Sundays and Feastdays until such time that local talent could do that.

But other difficulties were in store for St. Angela's Convent. During the noon hour of February 15, 1928, suddenly cries of “Fire! Fire!” resounded through the building. Fire had broken out in the unfinished room above the chapel. Apparently a short circuit between the chapel ceiling and the rough board flooring of the room above it, was the cause. So strong was the pressure that the door between the “corkroom” and that section could not be opened, and such dense volumes of smoke issued forth that nobody could tell the exact place of the fire. The fire brigade began, therefore, to pour in water at random. Through a hole made into the roof, and through windows, and through balcony doors the water was forced in. The whole town rushed to the scene to help. All, no matter what nationality or denomination, all were bent upon saving the Convent from destruction! In a short time the fire was checked — but what a sight met the eye! Running and drip-dripping went the water from second floor to first, and down to the basement —! About four inches of water sought lower levels through floors and ceiling

and walls. All bedding and clothing in the dormitories were soaked and dripping. Smoke and soot and water everywhere. Then everybody turned to work with pails, shovels, and rags to remove the water as quickly as possible. Of course, there was no question of inhabiting the place until some time after the furnace had been kept going day and night, and the most necessary clean-up work had been done. For the next few mornings it was an interesting sight to see little groups of twos and threes and fives of the convent inhabitants issuing forth from houses all over town to meet at the little church for the Sacrifice of the Mass and afterwards inquiring of one another of their whereabouts and then return to their places of hospitality. Waiting for the time to return to the convent did not seem long, for during the interval no one was idle. Washing machines and wash boards were whirring and rub-a-dubbing all over the village — and sheets, and blankets, and bedspreads, table cloths, and clothing, together with pillows and mattresses hanging out to dry figuratively covered the little village and “made a blackout.” Indeed, the kind helpfulness of the people will never be forgotten.

The washing and drying campaign was followed by another — that of restoration and repair. Scraping, scouring, scrubbing; lye, soap, paint-remover; oil, paint, varnish, and kalsomine nearly wore the fingers off willing hands, but nothing was too much for the House of God and Home.

The end of this campaign was marked by a beautiful feast: the investiture of postulants, a feast which had to be postponed due to the fire. That brought the membership of the Community to eighteen Sisters and three postulants. Some more vocations were in view, but the “would-be-candidates” were as yet too young. However, the yearly admissions steadily increased —.

After the feast, work was resumed. Repair and construction followed the clean-up campaign. The unfinished part above the chapel was divided into four rooms and a hallway. The “Corkroom” derives its name from the cork flooring put in to cover the damaged wooden floor. Tin ceiling was put in to cover up fire ravages there. The front lower verandah was closed in, and the upper one built. The entrance at the back had consisted of a little porch and outside steps. A closed-in entrance was built now, and to one side of that, a basement for a larger furnace which had to be installed.

The following August 15th, the Feast of the Assumption of Our Lady, marked a great event in the history of the Institute. Six Sisters pronounced their First Vows! Others were patiently waiting to make

their Novitiate, too, and become Professed Religious. Indeed, Our Heavenly Mother must have been pleased to see her little children so eager to "grow up." And we can well imagine the joy of Father Riedinger, Mother Clementia, and the first Sisters who had made the beginning possible to see the tree they had planted bearing fruit and becoming more firmly rooted. May the good God only deign to send many more laborers into His Vineyard — and may He send them soon, for everywhere there was work awaiting them.

A number of applications had already been made for Sisters. Leipzig still claimed the right by virtue of the request made by their former pastor, Father Krist. Revenue, next station to Tramping Lake, also wanted Sisters; so did Rosetown, Claybank, and various other towns, even some pastors from Alberta and the United States asked for their schools to be staffed. But all had to be disappointed for the present. Not only was the number too small, but the members were still too young and inexperienced to carry on away from the Motherhouse.

Therefore, it was thought expedient to stay very close to home and accept three rural schools in the district, namely, Elardce, Selz, and Haig. The Sisters resided at the Rosenthal parish house which was then vacant and was also centrally situated. But going to the schools daily proved quite a strain on the Sisters, and a re-adjustment was necessary. Instead of continuing to live at the rectory, each Sister with a companion resided in the teacherage for five days of the week and came home for the week-end. By 1940, twelve rural schools had at one time or another been taught by the Sisters. In addition to those already mentioned, there were Dirksburg, Neufeld, Baden, Rosenthal, Keebleville, Dante, Mackenzie, Frohlich, and Hegg Schools.

Only the last two mentioned together with Niccfield School are at present in our charge. Their nucleus is at Liebenthal where the vacant Krasna Rectory was moved in 1943 and reconditioned into "St. Anthony's Convent." Liebenthal is a village in the making and will probably have in the very near future a High School of its own to serve the large area between Leader and Fox Valley and extending far in an easterly direction, as well as a consolidated public school to serve adjacent school districts.

The spring of 1929 brought the first death in the Community. Sister Margaret had joined, as it seemed, in direct answer to a novena to Our Lady of Prompt Succor, and it was in the month of May that Our Lady called Sister to her eternal Home. The Community deeply felt the loss, and there was left a vacancy that could be filled by no

other. Her genuine piety and child-like simplicity, combined with her practical common sense and kind, maternal understanding, together with unselfish, conscientious service rendered, had made her beloved of all within and without the convent. Great was the anxiety when Sister Margaret had to be rushed to Empress, the nearest hospital, for an appendix operation! But she was soon doing well and was expected to be discharged shortly, when she suddenly took a turn for the worse. Came the call: "Come immediately!"

"I will be their secure refuge during life and more especially at the hour of death," Our Lord had promised in His apparition to St. Margaret Mary, to all who would honor His Sacred Heart and communicate on nine consecutive First Fridays. Our Lord verified His promise in this His devoted client to His Sacred Heart. The Sisters arrived at the hospital a few minutes too late. But the nurse, a non-Catholic, gave them this consoling message: "Just before Sister Margaret died, her face lit up with joy as her eyes fixed on something not visible to those about her. After remaining thus for a few moments, she turned to the nurse and said, 'Tell Reverend Mother I have seen the Sacred Heart' — and then she expired."

The summer of that same year brought an unwelcome change in the Provincial Government. The Conservatives under J. T. M. Anderson, commonly referred to as "the Anderson Government" replaced the Liberals on the strength of their promise to put the "Nuns" out of the schools. Accordingly, laws were passed forbidding the Crucifix, the making of the Sign of the Cross, and all religious emblems in school. It would be a simple matter to put the nuns out — forbid the garb . . . To the surprise and dismay of that Government the teaching Sisters throughout the province took off the garb, and put on secular clothes, or a modified garb! No matter what the sacrifice cost, they would not abandon the children to whom they were devoting their life's work. And so they carried on as before. Of course, there ever remained that troublesome question, "These thrusts having failed, what will come next?" The problem remained a menace; and agitators were never wanting.

Our Bishops were greatly concerned and did all they could to meet the danger. However, at the next provincial election the Liberals were returned with an overwhelming majority, and freedom and security were once more restored.



ST. JOSEPH'S HOSPITAL.

Besides Catholic Education, the people felt the needs of a hospital and wished the Sisters to extend their work also in that direction. Once more building operations were begun; once more donations were accepted to get a good beginning; and the hospital was

ready to admit patients early in the year of 1931. Dr. McNeil was the first doctor. All went well for a time, but not without a tremendous strain on the still insufficient membership of the Community whose special aptitude was teaching rather than nursing. However, time would have readily solved this problem had not financial difficulties set in again. Hard times came, and made collection of many bills impossible without taking stringest measures, which, of course, the Sisters shrank from taking. Consequently, not enough money came in to meet current expenses while the remaining debt on the building mounted. Teachers' salaries were used to balance the debit side of the Hospital accounts, but that, in turn depleted the much needed revenue of the Convent —. There remained but one alternative: to close the hospital until such time when it would again be possible to operate it.

That was followed by stormy opposition. The people had found their clean, neat little hospital a great boon and were loath to have it closed . . . Knowing how little it was realized, or even believed, in what straits the Convent found itself, and under what force of uncontrollable circumstances it had to act despite all opposition, made it doubly hard. It caused a rift that was keenly felt on both sides and that only the hope in the future could ameliorate.

The hospital was re-opened in 1940 when it was rented to Dr. Levson. It was operated under this arrangement for another five years. During this time the Convent made every effort to clear the hospital of all debt — a debt which had grown to more than double the original. As soon as that had been reduced sufficiently, the remaining debt was added to that of the Convent and a clear title obtained. Then, in order to retrieve the money paid in, it was offered for sale in 1945 to the Prelate Union Hospital District to be operated as a Union Hospital.

A few years after the founding of the Missions of Tramping Lake and Quinton, Lemberg Separate School was accepted. Lemberg is a little town lying in a tree studded area between Regina and Grayson.

About a quarter of a mile outside the town stands a fine little stone church, rectory, and a Catholic Separate School. The school had a heavy enrolment and it was expected that before long an addition of a second room would be built. With this in prospect, the one-roomed school was accepted for the time being.

Contrary to expectations the enrolment, instead of rising, went down. Since the distance between Prelate and Lemberg was too great to keep a little community there, we withdrew after about four years, in favor of the Ursulines of Vibank, who had in the meantime re-opened their school at Grayson and who were much closer to Lemberg.

At the beginning of the thirties began the drought years. For seven successive years there were crop failures because of lack of rain. The usual strong spring winds extended into the summer and raised great quantities of fine soil loosened by cultivation and void of vegetable fibre to bind it together. Clouds of dust towered skyward and darkened the sun so that sometimes it was necessary to light the lamps. Some places came to look like deserts. Nothing could grow.

Almost all our schools were situated in the stricken area—the “Dust Bowl”, as it came to be commonly called. The people lived on relief. No taxes were paid and teachers’ salaries remained unpaid. Even a part of the Government Grant was often withheld and used for the repair of the school and for fuel and equipment. Those were hard times, indeed! And it was often asked, “Is it possible for a community to continue to exist in that area?” But God watched over His own. His lessons of poverty taught in the stable of Bethlehem, at Nazareth, and on Calvary were remembered and ever inspired confidence, fortitude, and perseverance. The darkest dust clouds retained a silver lining and even if But did not the Star re-appear to the Magi? Surely next year it will be better—. Our people were suffering the same want; we remained with them and suffered with them. *“In te, Domine, speravi, non confundar in aeternum.”*

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Let us now consider the expansion of our Mission field. Omitting Lemberg, from which we had withdrawn, there was an interval of ten years between the taking over of the public school at Quinton in 1927, and that of Denzil in 1937. This was followed by Revenuc the next

year, and Mendham in 1939. Denzil, almost wholly Catholic, had its four-roomed public school and a Protestant Separate School. The public school consisted of Junior and Senior High School rooms, and two rooms for Grades I to VII. As the two latter rooms became over-crowded, another room was opened in the basement four years later.

Here, too, the Sisters entered wholeheartedly into the work that lay before them. But the parish of Denzil comprised a much larger area than was included in the Denzil School District. Other school districts, too, asked for Sisters. Therefore, the following year the two adjoining schools — Glen Eden and St. Peter's — were accepted. St. Peter's operated two rooms for Grades I to XII. The year following, Falcunhurst and Bride Schools were added to the list.

The war had created a great shortage of teachers, and that is why the urgent requests from Palm School and from Gottlob School obtained Sisters for them, at least for the time being. Here, as in Prelate, the Sisters remained with a companion at school, living in the teacherage and coming to Denzil for the week-ends.

The rented house in Denzil sufficed at the beginning to comfortably accommodate its little community but soon a larger dwelling became a necessity. Accordingly, a house together with ten acres of land adjacent to the beautiful stucco church, and grounds, were purchased. This house was re-built and enlarged — and became the St. Clement's Convent.

At the present date, the only rural school retained is Palm, about half a mile from Grosswerder Church where daily Mass attendance is possible. The average enrolment is fifty, and it is looked forward to having a second room added before long.

Revenue's long-standing request could at last be satisfied. It had two one-roomed school buildings a few yards apart and needed still a High School. For that purpose a rickety little old house was furnished with a teacher's desk, blackboards, and some home-made pupils' desks, and there High School Grades were taught. Four or five years passed before a small building was erected close to the other rooms — on a much more convenient site.

Mendham had moved its neat little country church to town and had obtained a resident parish priest; what was still needed, was religious teachers in their school, and, since Prelate was not far away, what would prevent them from making their approach? The lack of a teacherage was not an insurmountable obstacle — temporary living quarters could be arranged above Grad's garage. And so it happened that for the first

year the Sisters lived there until they had their own house — which they named the “Little Flower Convent.” When Mendham got its new stucco school, the little Convent was enlarged by an additional two rooms, to provide for a second Sister now employed.

Three years passed before another mission was founded, that of Billimun. Rev. Father Roy, P.P., had long been asking for Sisters. And when he even enlisted the aid of the Bishop in pleading his cause, there was no further refusal possible.

When the Sisters arrived, they received a royal welcome from the parish. Father had left nothing to chance, but date, time, and route for the arrival were carefully planned. At a certain point, riders on decorated horses came to meet the Sisters’ car to accompany them to the church where Father with his parishioners awaited them. High Mass was celebrated, a sincere and warm welcome was extended, and the *Te Deum* was sung! Could such earnestness of purpose, such solicitude for the education of those children be doubted, or such whole-souled effort be resisted?

The year 1943 proved a veritable avalanche! Liebenthal, Fox Valley, Goodsoil, and Barthel received Sisters for their schools. To the South and to the North went the Ursulines — to the drought emerging South that was beginning to breathe a dust-cleared air again in a normal life; and the pioneering North, germinating and bursting into vigorous life with a strong confident hope in the future.

Both Barthel, and Goodsoil lie beyond the “Last Lamp” and are connected with St. Walburg by a highway, parts of which were not yet completed at that time. Poverty again was an outstanding characteristic of these beginnings. Real pioneering pervaded the whole atmosphere. Building homes, clearing land, making roads and fences; building their churches, schools etc. kept everyone hard at work and on the alert for ingenious methods and the devices that would best serve the purpose to accomplish and provide for necessities. Of course, the Sisters must needs fall in step and contribute their share to the progress of God’s “Bush Country.” The children were in need of instruction, both for their eternal and temporal welfare.

Barthel’s first school was built of logs and mud, had home-made benches and desks, and a gasoline-barrel heater. Gasoline-barrel stoves may have been a novelty to strangers but were the most familiar and practical heating system known to the people of northern communities.

The next year a frame building was constructed, and the following year an additional room built on. The new school and teacherage are

situated close to the church, rectory, filling station, store and post office, and thus help to form the nucleus of a little village.

Goodsoil turned a store into a classroom, which also had to serve as a chapel, since their church is situated a little out of town. Besides this there was the rural school of Goodsoil, which was replaced by a new two-roomed school the next year. The following year the Larger Unit began the construction of a four-roomed brick school. But due to shortage of labor and available building material, winter overtook them and brought the project to a halt. Therefore, the unused part of the old store was temporarily made use of for a second classroom, and High School students were admitted.

The Sisters had lived at first in what now serves as a second classroom, then, in a building built for a small local hospital, but which had not yet been operated, and then they moved into the vacant rectory. But no matter where they took up their abode, or how numerous the sacrifices connected with their dwellings, they insisted upon calling it "Holy Angels' Convent." It is hoped that some day they will have a real Convent of the Holy Angels.

A word remains to be said of Fox Valley. When the Sisters arrived there for the opening of the school in the fall, the house they were to occupy was not yet vacated, and as there was no other house available, they lived for the first two months in the basement of the rectory. Remembering that every beginning has its difficulties, they cheerfully looked upon this as a necessary problem of initiation, and appreciated the well-built and cozy little house all the more when they could move in. The first year two Sisters were engaged, while two lay teachers were retained. Then another two-roomed school was built and another Sister took charge of the fifth classroom now opened. Fox Valley is a prosperous little town between Maple Creek and Leader and offers a promising field of labour.

1944 saw the last mission opened: St. Walburg. A Catholic Separate School was established, and, at last the project so dear to the heart of the people of St. Walburg, was realized. But just at this point it almost failed. Although they had for some time been promised Sisters—when they would have succeeded in forming their Separate School, Goodsoil and Barthel had got ahead of them, and when their plans at last materialized of a sudden, all of "St. Angela's teachers" had been placed! What could be done? After much hard thinking and re-arranging of plans and Normal School courses, two teachers were sent, and the next year another one for the third room.

St. Walburg is the terminal, or, as it was earlier alluded to, "the Last Lamp" of the railway in a north-easterly direction from Battleford, and a distributing centre for the "Bush Country." Six miles out of town is the famous Imhoff Art Studio which no sojourner to the North should miss visiting.

Although 1945 witnessed no further expansion, several missions made improvements. Tramping Lake, in the early part of this sketch, was left with three classrooms in operation, two of which were still in the church basement. Before long a two-roomed school was built for the elementary grades, leaving the old school for a high school room; finally a Junior High School room was opened in one of the basement rooms of the new building.

In 1945, after a twenty years' existence, the Sisters got their own dwelling which is the present "St. Joseph's Convent."

In the course of time two rural schools, namely Queensview and Kerson, had been accepted. At this time only the former is retained.

Ready means of communication between the Motherhouse and these Missions was quite necessary. It was a far greater necessity between the Convent and the rural schools when the Sisters had to be brought home for the week-ends. Therefore, as times and circumstances demanded, a truck was purchased, and later also a car. This eliminated many otherwise troublesome problems. One disadvantage remained — it was impossible to get drivers at all times. Why not have some Sister learn to drive? "Necessity is the mother of inventions." She is also a good teacher — and some Sisters learned to drive the car and the truck . . . This proved invaluable! Especially was it so when our Garden at the River was started in 1939 which demanded daily driving. Doing our own driving offered innumerable opportunities of gratitude to God for His constant visible protection; and gratitude to our neighbor for the many acts of helpful charity. Help invariably came when it was needed, or things just did not go wrong before a town or a garage was reached . . . How many little miracles of that kind could be related, but we shall let it suffice here to say Thanks be to God and to the many good people who have had occasion to help us.

Repeated attempts at gardening on the Convent premises had ended in failure. There was the usual lack of rain to be reckoned with; then, too, the Convent being situated on high grounds, conservation of moisture was not possible, nor was the soil suitable for the growing of vegetables. Another source of supply had to be sought.

A new venture, for that reason, was made at the river where some springs were discovered in a ravine leading down towards the river. Some land was purchased from the Government, fenced off, and a few acres were broken in the summer of 1938. The ravine was closed up at a convenient place to form a dam for the water running down from the springs. Because the springs were three in number, they were named "Trinity Springs."

The first shelter there was a cooking car on wheels. Later, when a little house was built, this was converted into a small chapel, and still later into a storehouse. More land was broken until there was enough for a vegetable garden and potato fields. By means of pipes and little ditches, the vegetable garden could be irrigated, but not as yet the potato fields. There are two serious problems connected with this project: One is the distance, which is about ten miles, but must be constantly travelled back and forth; the other is the presence of alkali, both in the soil, and in the water supply. Means and ways have yet to be devised to overcome these obstacles —. If original plans will some day materialize, it could become a lovely little summer resort for the Sisters! The needs of the Community will call for such facilities in the very near future.

Another milestone was reached in 1944 when the Anniversary Bells rang for the solemn High Mass of the Silver Jubilee of our Institute! The beautiful Feast of St. Angela, May 31, was selected for this occasion. It was regretted that our Sisters from the more distant Missions could not be Home for the day, since duty kept them at their posts. However, they celebrated in their own ingenious way throughout the province. Miles separated us but union of hearts and minds and a common Mother united us!

Certainly St. Angela, our illustrious Foundress, smiled down on us, her daughters, and rejoiced with us. In her "Souvenirs" left to us, she says: "I am constantly in your midst with Him who is our love, provided you believe and never lose courage or hope. Be glad and rejoice, for in heaven there is prepared for each one of you a new crown of glory and happiness, provided you remain firm and stable in your holy resolutions and endeavor to observe the Rule."

The little seed planted in 1919, and which had grown for twenty-five years, had now developed into a beautiful tree whose mission branches to date number "eleven." This coincident number we fondly chose to look upon as symbolic of the eleven thousand virgins, who received their glorious crown of martyrdom under the leadership of our God-given Patroness, St. Ursula.

Who can realize the abundant treasures of grace which God had been pleased to shed upon us all during these twenty-five years! O yes, this work is God's work! He has kept us all in His Heart. We rejoiced and we were glad; we renewed our holy Vows; we rendered a heartfelt *Te Deum* to our good Master for all He has done for our Community. Let us always love it as we love it now. If we always love our Vocation, our Vows; if we always love one another, if we always uphold one another, we will be capable of working wonders and Heaven will be certain. St. Angela says, "The sufferings of this world are as nothing in comparison with the joys of Paradise."

In the course of life, terrible storms often break upon us. Sometimes we find ourselves wrapped in deepest darkness. As the barque of Peter was tossed by the tempest, so we often find our little and frail vessel tempest-driven and desperately struggling to survive. Then it is that we must cling closer than ever to the barque which cannot perish — the Church. May the spirit of charity, simplicity, and gratitude be the soul and life of our Institute and ever draw down upon us the blessings and protection of that holy Church.

In experiencing the paternal solicitude, devotedness, and zeal of so many of the Church's finest members of the Canadian hierarchy, we have been most fortunate! Our first "Good Shepherd" to bestow his tender care upon us was His Grace, Archbishop Oliver Mathieu of Regina, R.I.P. He was succeeded by His Grace, James Charles McGuigan, who, later became Archbishop of Toronto, and is now Cardinal. The short time during which we were under his care, is marked by many kindly acts towards us.

His Grace, Peter Joseph Monahan, D.D., became the next Archbishop of Regina, and we trust that he may remain with us for many more years.

In 1930 the Diocese of Gravelbourg was erected and His Excellency, the Most Rev. J. M. Rodrigue Villeneuve became its first Bishop. In his loving paternal interest in the struggling little Community on the prairies, he even consented to preach our Annual Retreat the following summer. Upon that occasion he also presided at the Ceremony of Investiture and Profession of Vows. With deep regret we received the news of his transfer; but we also rejoiced at his promotion to the Archdiocese of Quebec and later to the rank of Cardinal.

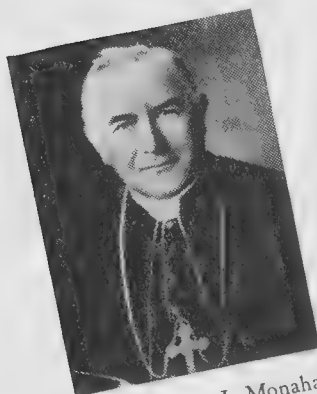
He was succeeded by His Excellency, the Most Rev. L. J. Arthur Melanson, R.I.P. Despite his failing health Bishop Melanson unsparingly spent himself for his flock to whom he was wholeheartedly devoted.



His Em. J. M. Rod.
Villeneuve, O.M.I.



His Em. J. C. McGuigan



His Grace P. J. Monahan



His Exc. A. Melanson



His Grace O. E. Mathieu



His Exc. M.J. Lemieux, O.P.



His Exc. J.M. Guy, O.M.I.

Again our hearts truly felt the great loss when he was transferred to Moncton, and our grateful prayers followed him to his grave.

His Excellency, brave hearted, Most Rev. Joseph Guy, O.M.I., then came to guide us through the trying years of drought and utter poverty. Undaunted by such conditions, but with implicit trust in Divine Providence, he toiled on courageously through dust and storm providing not only for the spiritual needs of his children but also for their temporal needs.

With deepest regret, we again had to part with another of our beloved Bishops—but never will fade from our memory his unforgettable motto to the Community: *"Per crucem ad lucem."*

Our present Bishop, His Excellency, Bishop Lemieux of Gravelbourg, is also generously bestowing upon us every possible care. His paternal guidance at all times, and encouragement imparted during his visits, have proved of inestimable benefit to the Community; his wide experience and abilities in financial matters are to us a great source of help and security. May God richly compensate him for his sincere devotedness.

In His Excellency's great zeal for our welfare he has granted us two very cherished and outstanding favours which we deeply appreciate. The first of these is our Night Watch. In October 1944, on the Feast of Christ the King, we were consecrated to the Sacred Heart. We love our "Night Watch" and eagerly look forward to the Thursday night



By FATHER MATEO

before First Friday of the month. From 9 o'clock in the evening until 5 o'clock in the morning we unite with the whole Heavenly Court in rendering Honor, Love and Atonement to the Sacred Heart of Jesus in compliance with Our Master's own invitation, "Will you watch one hour with Me?"

The second favor granted us on the first Saturday of January 1946, was the Consecration of the Community to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. This was made in the spirit of compliance with Our Lady's request to the three little shepherd children at Fatima in Portugal, to whom she said, "I come to ask the consecration of the entire world to my Immaculate Heart, and the Communion of Reparation on the First Saturday of the month." May we always fittingly return love for love to God's own Blessed Mother.



FATHER RIEDINGER

Devotion to St. Joseph was instilled by our revered and good Father Riedinger. It is to him we owe much more than words could here adequately tell. It must have been through the aid of silent St. Joseph that made the erection of this home possible to him. It was Father Riedinger who shared with us the early trials, difficulties, cares, joys and sorrows attending the establishment of a new foundation. In our temporal wants his architectural abilities supplied the need of a contractor's plans; and his continual supervision of all construction work saved much time, labor, and money — all of which were extremely important. His zealous, active nature prompted him to courageously undertake and carry forward

the task he set himself to accomplish. The general and particular welfare of the Institute and of every individual member he had made his constant concern. It was through Father Riedinger's instructions and guidance that the spiritual nucleus of the Community was formed. It was Father who presided at the early investitures. Our gratitude to him will always find its sincerest expression before the Tabernacle where we daily beg Our Lord to grant him all he needs in this life and eternal glory in the life to come.

To the present time, most of our work has been in parishes in charge of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate. Our chaplains, too, have been the Oblate Fathers. Good old Father Forner has conscientiously discharged this duty in the convent for the past four years. Father's extraordinary punctuality holds an unbroken record despite his advanced age and is greatly appreciated in helping us keep the order of the day.

Our Sisters in the Missions have received much encouragement and assistance from the Fathers with whom we have had the good fortune to work as co-laborers in the Vineyard of Our Lord. It is consoling and inspiring to come in contact with the tremendous missionary zeal emanating from a quiet, obscure Priestly heart. Sacrifice, labor, fatigue, lack of living accommodation, lack of funds — all had to be overcome to obtain and keep the Sisters for the instruction of the children in their parishes. We trust that these good Fathers may always share in the graces and blessings resulting from the faithful performance of our duties in their schools.

Here in the Motherhouse we have adopted the beautiful practice of remembering all our scholars in a special way by a Day of Prayer during the Christmas season. On the Feast of Holy Innocents, December 28, all our children of the five-roomed town school are invited to attend Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament in the Convent Chapel. This is followed by a pleasant surprise of some kind, such as fire-works, a free movie, singing, etc., followed by some sweets, always very much anticipated and enjoyed.

The children entrusted to our care number at present over one thousand. How many have gone through our hands during these past twenty-five years! Our interest and prayers follow them wherever they may go, trusting that our endeavors to be good to them and a help to them along life's rugged path, have not been in vain. May they ever remain true and staunch Catholics to the very fibre of their heart.

But in order to give these children religious teachers, who can compute the cost, sacrifice, time, and patient labour which was required

of this Institute to attain this objective! St. Angela's Convent has truly been the cradle, not only of our Religious Infancy, but also the Preparatory School for Religious Education, for, according to our Foundress, the life of an Ursuline should be one of self-immolation, prayer, and action.

Oh! May this Motherhouse, St. Angela's at Prelate, ever be "as a tree planted by running water, spreading its branches covered with leaves, flowers, and fruit on all sides." May it ever be the centre of union for us all; we ought to look upon it as a blessed and holy place. The rich fount of graces, the salutary streams which have watered the whole field of our beloved Institute have their source at St. Angela's in Prelate.

Let us hold our Annual Reunions in great respect and love. Let us be happy to assemble here for the summer vacation to bless and thank God, to be strengthened in union, and to rejoice together in His holy presence. Happy to come and renew our holy Vows in these sacred precincts and to preserve to posterity the spirit of charity and zeal.

It was December 8, 1919, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, that this House was blessed and became the home of the first three Sisters. It was in 1945, again on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, when the following telegram was received:

"Congratulations to the *One-Hundredth*, and to all the Sisters!"

Signed: (Rev.) Joseph Schneider, O.M.I.
(Spiritual Director of the Community),

Assuredly from heaven we also received spiritual telegrams from the four of our beloved deceased Sisters who unceasingly intercede at the throne of God for the "One Hundred" here on earth.

We also hold in immediate memory Miss E. Graffelder, R.I.P., the dear sister of Mother Clementia and cherished friend of the Convent. Miss Graffelder had made her home with us during her stay in Canada. She was fondly called by the Sisters "Auntie Li." It was with great distress that we witnessed her strength slowly ebbing away and we finally had to lay her to rest in the graveyard with our Sisters.

There, also, you will find the resting place of the niece of Rev. Father Riedinger. Margaret Bickar's stay with us was very brief, but she too, is included in the "Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord."

It was in the summer of 1942 that the tremendous responsibility of the Government of the Community fell to one of the first candidates

admitted into our Institute. To the human heart re-adjustment to changes is deeply felt and extremely difficult. However, acknowledging that all the great works of God have at some time or other hung on a slender thread; and knowing that humble submission to God's unerring ordinance gives Him greater glory than all human wisdom combined, we rendered ready obedience to our new Superior, Mother Bernarda.

Many were her anxieties, and manifold her cares in this her new office. However, her high sense of duty, her spirit of sacrifice, her generous heart and lively faith buoyed her up as she bravely shouldered her daily cross — and, St. Angela's at Prelate continued to Sail On . . .

*"Our echoes roll from soul to soul,
And grow forever and forever."*

(TENNYSON)

Upon closing this short history we would record one more incident worthy of mention. Among life's incomparably great and unsurpassingly sublime events stands the ordination of a young man to the Priesthood and the celebration of his First Holy Mass. This singular privilege was ours on June 16, 1945, when Reverend Father Paul Feist, O.M.I., celebrated his First Holy Mass in our Convent Chapel. Special interests were connected with this privilege, for Father Paul is the youngest brother of our present superior, Reverend Mother Antoinette, and therefore, the Community claimed him as its own. It was a beautiful and happy day for all of us, and we mutually agreed with Father's proposal: Oremus pro invicem! — Let us pray for each other.

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The present pamphlet is written to recount very briefly the calling into existence, and the story of the first twenty-five years of our Institute. If this sketch be deemed meagre and incomplete, let it be remembered that each sign-post along the way, be it ever so inconspicuous, if it still gives information to the wayfarer, justifies its existence. We have not attempted to make any of our accounts complete; but we have endeavored to "Gather up the fragments lest they be lost." And, even though we are but a tiny branch of that great Ursuline tree which struck root at Brescia, deep in the heart of St. Angela; and even though we are but a tiny portion of that great Order of twenty-thousand Ursulines engaged the world over in the grand work of education, we consciously remember that we fully share in the divine promise:

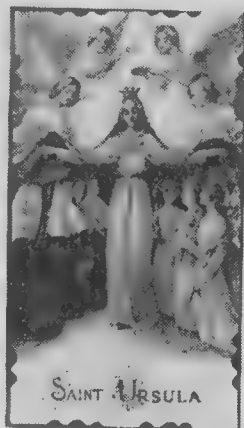
*"They that instruct others unto justice, shall shine like stars
for all eternity."*

(Daniel XII, 3).

ST. ANGELA'S MISSIONS



Dorcas School



Marion School



Bilham School



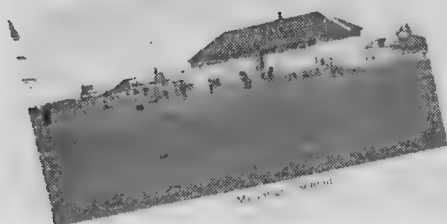
Lutheran School



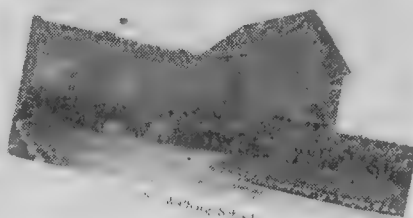
Lutheran School



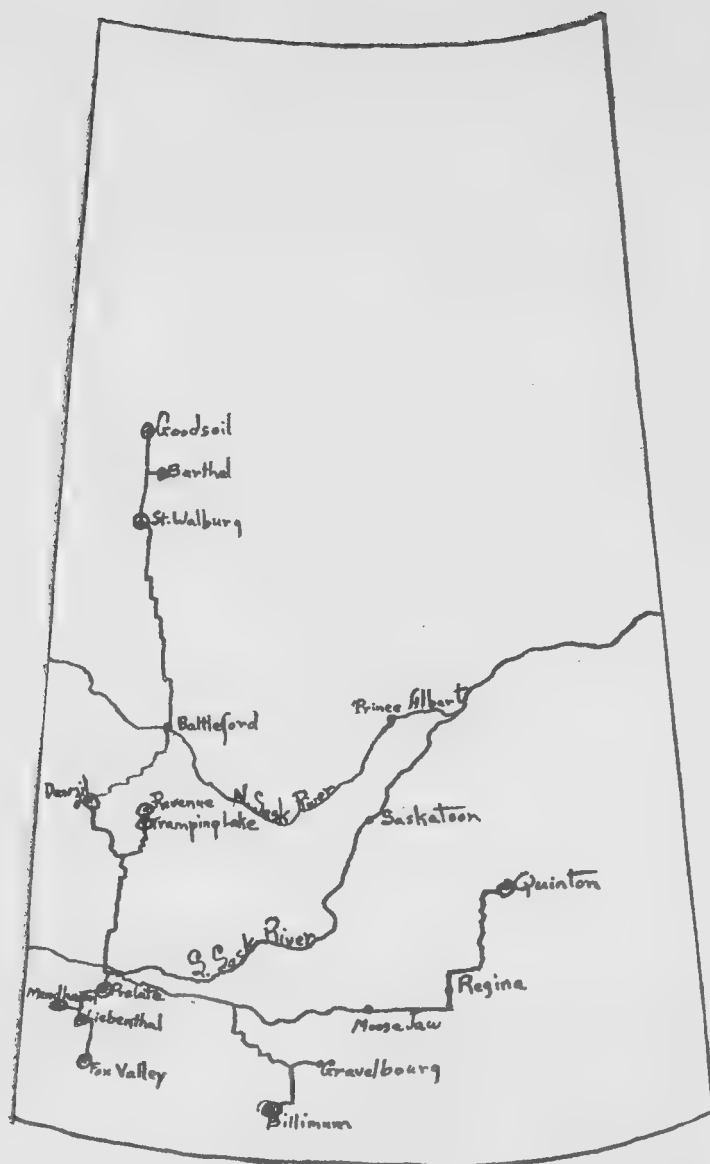
First School at Barthel



Marion School



Marion School



St. Angela's Greyhound Bus Lines .

As indicated on the map, the Motherhouse and four Missions are located in the diocese of Gravelbourg; one in the archdiocese of Regina; three in the diocese of Saskatoon, and three in that of Prince Albert.

Thinking of You

(TUNE: CRADLE SONG — Brahms)

When it's "Missions Good-bye!"
We smile bravely, but sigh
When to south and to the north,
Our Missioners go forth.

||: Wish God speed and success
All your work may He bless! :||

All your work through the year
Be it pleasant or drear —
All your trials, your cares
Are enclosed in our prayers.

||: Ah we know that you pray
For us also each day. :||

All we say, all we do
Our thoughts fly to you
For the children you lead
With our Foundress we plead

||: That you come not alone
But with them to His throne :||

When the school year has flown
We will welcome you home
With a smile that is true
And a song just for you

||: Welcome home, Sisters dear
Let's spread joy and good cheer! :||



ORIGINAL POEMS

The Nun

By the sanctuary lamp's dim glow
As darkness nearer steals,
Beside a candle burning low
A silent, modest figure kneels,
In profoundest adoration
Bowing low her head,
There in sweet propitiation
Atone for sins for which He bled;
There in deepest contemplation
Of His burning love;
Sending up an aspiration
To the Saviour Christ above.
Thanking Him while on her knees
For choosing her His Spouse
Asking Him to help her, please
To be faithful to her Vows.
Praying that the blood He shed
Will not be in vain;
That we never choose instead
The path that brings eternal pain;
Offering to Him once again
Herself in reparation
For the hardened hearts of men
For sin's wrought devastation.
Such a life of immolation
For her Spouse and King
Oh! Jesus Christ, what consolation
Such a soul to Thee doth bring!

A Pledge of Love

What matter all trials and sufferings?
What matter all heartaches and pain?
What matter if clouds hang heavy?
What matter if darkness remain?
Even if all will forsake you,
Even if teardrops will fall,
And there seem no joy for you ever
E'en then, what matters it all?
When all is lonesome and dreary
When dark are the clouds in the sky
Harken, O soul, be merry,
For Christ your Saviour is nigh.
Lean your head on His Heart;
Courage, O soul, do not fear,
He loves to console and to comfort,
He wants you to trust, to stay near.
Listen as He will say sweetly,
"Remember that you're not alone,
Remember that I am yet with you,
I know of each briar and stone.
Yea, with my own hands I placed it
Just where you find it right now —
But listen, my Spouse, I love you
And you'll never, you'll never know how;
I love you beyond all telling
My love for you is strong and intense.
From eternity I existed —
I loved you e'en from thence.
And all these sufferings I send you
Trials, whatever they be,
Griefs, heartaches, and sorrows,
Are my "Pledge of Love" for thee,
Then peace, my Spouse, then silence.
Forget all your pain and your grief
Cling to my Heart so burning
With love . . . and you'll find relief."

The Priest

Pure as the purest of lilies,
White as the new fallen snow,
The soul of a priest is radiant,
From it a true love doth flow;
Filled with the deepest emotion,
Yearning to love God still more,
E'en though his heart is on fire
Blazing with love to the core,
Pure as ciborium or chalice,
Are his hands as they daily uplift
The Son of our Heavenly Father—
Christ Jesus, His most precious Gift.
Blessed are his feet that have trodden
Through the heat and the bitterest of cold,
Through the snow, the dust, and the mire
Over wearisome miles untold.
Jesus he brings to the dying,
To the prisoned, the aged, the infirm;
God will reward him in heaven
At the end of his toilsome term.
At the end of his toilsome term,

Our Common Goal

United in soul and heart and will,
With a common goal in mind,
Assembled with those in St. Ursula's band,
Dost Christ in thy children find
To tell of Him, thy Royal Spouse,
To live His way and manner,
Didst choose to follow Angela
'Neath great St. Ursula's banner.
O Ursuline, obedient, pure,
Swerve from thy pathway never,
Instruct the ignorant, the poor—
God bless thy high endeavor!

ST. ANGELES "URSULINES"

1887-1945

CANADA

FRANCE



ST. ANGELA'S "URSULINES"

1535-1945

ITALY

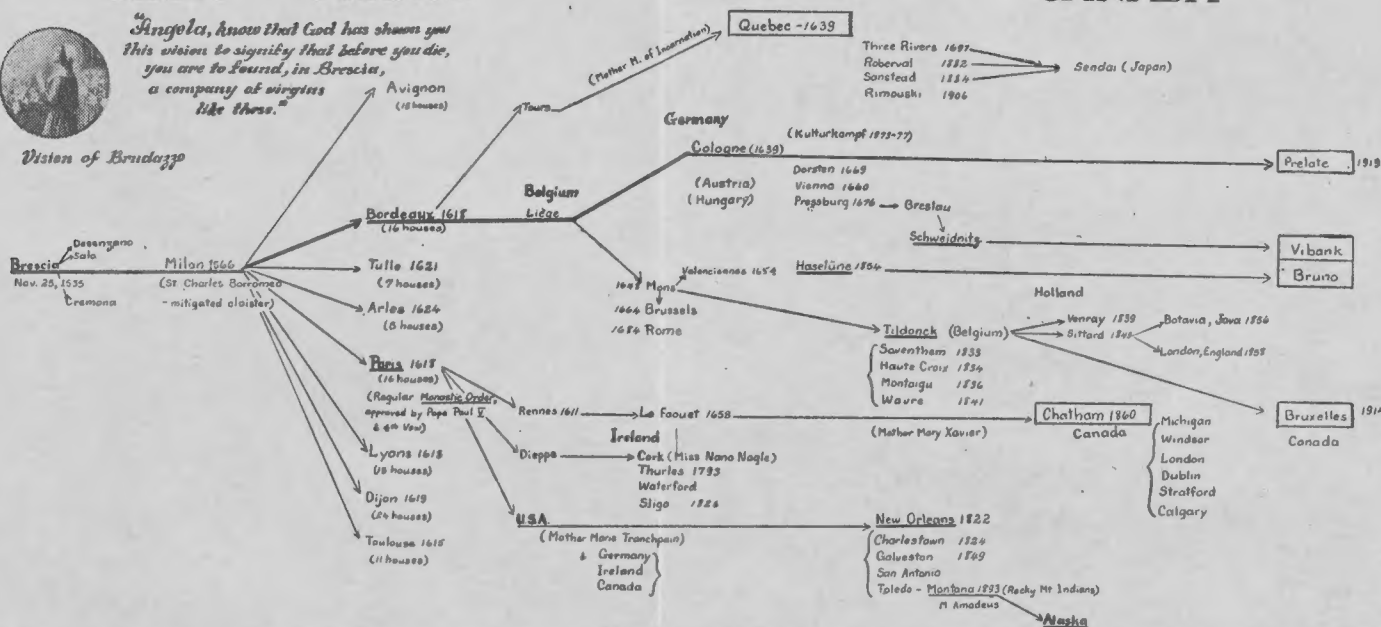
FRANCE

CANADA



Vision of Brudazzo

"Angela, know that God has shown you this vision to signify that before you die, you are to found, in Brescia, a company of virgins like these."



Prelate:
St. Angela's Convent - 1919.



Tramping Lake	1925
Quinton	1927
Denzil	1937
Revenue	1938
Mendham	1939
Billimun	1942
Liebethal	1943
Barthel	1943
Goodsoil	1943
Fox Valley	1943
St. Walburg	1944

